

**SPEECH BY MS DIPUO PETERS, MP, MINISTER OF ENERGY, AT  
THE SECOND KUMBA IRON ORE ORGANISED PARTNERSHIP  
EVENT: THABAZIMBI, 29 AUGUST 2009**

Programme Director

Mayor Naledi Matlou (the hosting Mayor of Thabazimbi Local Municipality)

MEC for Roads and Transport Limpopo Province, Comrade Pinky Kekana

MEC for Economic Development, Environment and Tourism Limpopo Province

Executive Mayor of the Waterberg District Municipality, Cllr Eric Gwangwa

Local Mayors of various Waterberg based local councils

Local Councillors from Thabazimbi Local Municipality

Management of Kumba Iron Ore Limited

Ladies and Gentlemen

Almost a year ago, in October last year to be exact, we gathered in Kuruman, in my home province of the Northern Cape, to launch the first ever chapter of this women empowerment initiative. The outcome of that gathering resembles what looks like a curate egg, it contains within it large pockets of that which is good. It is both fitting and appropriate therefore that the organizers deemed it fit, once again, to invite us to the launch the Thabazimbi chapter of the Kuruman initiative.

They decided to invite us even though we are not responsible for the portfolio of the country's minerals. The organizers clearly understood the symbiotic relationship that exists between the portfolio of energy and that of mineral resources.

In 1996, Joe Slovo, then general secretary of the South African Communist Party was asked about what comes first between the class and national struggle. He gave a profound reply and stated that what matters most is, not which one is supreme to the other, but rather the relationship between the two.

We need to understand the nature of the relationship between minerals and energy in those terms. This is exactly what the organizers of this gathering understood that they too understand that, “what matters most is, not which one is supreme... but rather the nature of the relationship between the two”. They, in fact, understand that nothing can survive without energy and that energy is at heart of any economic development including that of iron ore.

I would like to thank the organizers for inviting us to gather in this beautiful part of our country. We are gathered here because we are inspired by the actions of women who decided, in 1955, that they could not accept the status of being second – or in fact third class citizens – in the country of their birth. Those brave actions of the heroic women of the congress movement were directed at ending the triple oppression of women. They were oppressed as blacks and as women and in fact they were also exploited as workers.

The events last week at the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) where the 18 year old teenager who has “... muscular build and deep voice sparked speculation about her gender”. Reports even went to an extent of speculating that she was going to be forced to undergo a gender test to determine whether she was male or female.

We now know that Caster Semenya has battled such allegations for years. Moloko Rapetsa, athletics organizer and Principal of Bakwena Secondary School – which Semenya attended - was quoted as saying, “some schools...suspecting that she was not a girl even demanded that her status be checked. But each time they returned from the toilet, she would be cleared and the competition would resume...some rival schools even approached the dept of home affairs to check if her birth certificate was not fraudulent.”

These events – which happened right in front of the naked eyes of the gender groups of some of the worlds industrialised powers are a poignant reminder that women do not have to rest on their laurels, but rather they should use these dastardly events and the democratic space that was created since 1994 to rededicate themselves to the realization of the revolutionary ideals of Helen Joseph, Bertha Gxowa, Ruth Mompati and Gethrude Shope and other women who marched to the union buildings and defied the then might of the apartheid machinery.

When our government took a decision to honour these heroines of 1955 by declaring August the women’s month, we were doing something that is not dissimilar to what other countries are doing. Whether you go to France, you are bound to visits sites dedicated to reminding the French youth about the French revolution. You will find the same in Germany where the place is literally festooned with memorials dedicated to the memory of the people who perished in the concentration camps during holocaust.

It is against this background that I am pleased to be associated with these kinds of initiatives. It is therefore not a surprise that we are all responding to the call of our President to

work together to do more in order to improve the lives of our women.

We are all gathered here, as women, drawn from all the walks of life that make the body politic of Thabazimbi in order to deliberate on what is it that each one of us can do to improve our own lives for the better. Through coming together we are giving concrete expression to the slogan 'united we stand and divided we fall'.

Clearly we are here gathered to say we indeed are grateful that our government has put into place a lot of policies and funding instruments to assist the women of our country. However, we cannot make an impact if we do not respond positively to initiatives similar to these one of Kumba Iron Ore.

As a government, we have passed legislation effectively compelling companies to invest in what we call social and labour plans. These plans should spell out clearly standards that are to be expected from companies operating in areas where there are surrounding communities.

Clearly we cannot continue to have a situation where the only legacy left in the former mining towns are holes accompanied by grinding poverty typified by informal settlements where our people are only sustained by their hope that tomorrow will be better than today and yesterday.

Accordingly, I am therefore urging you to continue to organise yourselves. I am glad that you have responded positively to the clarion call of 'Bomme Itsoseng'. It is only by doing things yourselves that you will improve not only your lives but that of your children and their siblings.

As you get your ducks in a proverb row, and as these are considered by the sioc super-trust for support, do not forget that you are representing the people of this city.

You have to ensure that you do not compete with other people but yourselves. Do not forget that when you are empowered – as I said in Kuruman last year – you do not therefore have to only enrich yourselves and your immediate families. This you do not have to do to the exclusion of the people who have been with you through thick and thin.

Finally, I wish to express, on behalf of the government, our sincere appreciation to Kumba Iron Ore, The Municipality of Thabazimbi, and the women assembled in this hall for launching and taking part in this important initiative. Government cannot solve all our problems. These have been festering like an irreparable sore for many years since 1652.

### **Thabazimbi Mine**

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### **WOMEN INDABA- BOMME ITSOSENG**

Kumba Iron Ore is launching the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Women Empowerment Initiative “Bomme Itsoseng” in partnership with the Thabazimbi Municipality Mayor, to acknowledge and

empower women in Thabazimbi. The first event was held in Kgalagadi District in Kuruman on the 25 October 2008.

This event aims to empower, motivate, share information and understand the needs of women surrounding our local communities. Simultaneously this will enable the hosted to identify developmental programs which are aligned with the needs of the community. (This is envisaged to be a sustainable initiative to be held annually.)

“Bomme Itsoseng” event will be launched in Thabazimbi Municipality, Thaba-Park on Saturday, 29 August 2009, 08h30-17h00.

### **Additional information on the commissions**

#### **The commissions include HEALTH AND WELFARE ISSUES:**

- Breast Cancer
- Women Health and Hygiene
- TB (Tuberculosis)
- HIV / AIDS, Peer Educators
- Asbestosis
- Physical Fitness
- Counselling, Social Workers & Local Clinics

#### **EDUCATION ISSUES:**

- Kinder-garden
- Ecotourism
- Career opportunities
- Access to Learnership and Bursaries
- Natural resource management (water saving, water quality in terms of awareness related to pollution)

management, the use of dirty water and associated diseases

**SOCIAL SUPPORT AND SECURITY ISSUES:**

- Social Grants
- Other relevant programs offered by the Department of Social Welfare

**HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES:**

- Child maintenance
- Domestic violence
- Women and child abuse
- Rape
- Civil rights “small claims court:
- Customary marriage & rights “entitlements”

**ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES ISSUES:**

- Financial management
- Access to financial services
- Entrepreneurship
- Tourism

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**Attached find Press Release from Kumba as promised, like I said the event is the initiative and custodian of Kumba Iron Ore Limited as we as the Municipality we are mainly presenting stakeholders and hosting all the people invited. Let me also indicate and brief you about the area.**

**The invited 300 women are from the 10 Municipal Wards that are within our local municipality of Thabazimbi. The 300 women are basically selected from various organisations and not political parties, some might belong to political parties but they are not invited on those basis as Kumba is a private sector.**

**Thabazimbi is mainly strong in Mining, Agriculture and Tourism(those are the three pillars of Thabazimbi)**

**We have arranged a marquee tent to accommodate at least 400 people at an open space stadia.**

**The Minister will also be humbly requested to attend the briefing session that will be held at Municipal Chamber which is just a kilometre away from the stadium Thaba-Park where the event is going to take place.**

**There will also be press room at the stadium.**

**I will also like to indicate to you that attendees will be mainly:**

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**We are still awaiting responses from Ministers Ms Shabangu (Mineral Resources) and Ms Molewa (Social Development) and other MEC's in Limpopo Province.**

**I hope the little I have presented to you will basically assist where necessary.**

**Kind regards,**

**Joshua Motsomane  
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